

transmitted from a terminal device. The user identifier generator generates a user identifier corresponding to the request. The generation source identifier memory stores a generation source identifier to identify a generation source of the user identifier. The transmitter transmits the generated user identifier and the stored generation source identifier to the terminal device.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims ~~1-4~~ and ~~6-21~~ by rewriting same to read as follows:

--1. (Amended) An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting information to a terminal device, comprising:

receiving means for receiving a request signal transmitted from the terminal device;

user identifier generating means for generating a user identifier corresponding to the request signal;

generation source identifier storage means for storing a generation source identifier identifying a generation source of the user identifier; and

transmitting means for transmitting the user identifier and the generation source identifier to the terminal device.

--2. (Amended) The information processing apparatus

according to claim 1, wherein the receiving means receives the request signal requesting the information processing apparatus to issue a user password identifying a user operating the terminal device and to issue an introduction password indicating the generation source of the user password.

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--3. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the receiving means receives individual information of the user operating the terminal device.

--4. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the receiving means receives a request signal requesting issue of the user password and the introduction password that are used for accessing homepage information contained within an other information processing apparatus, and the introduction password specifies the homepage information of the information processing apparatus that introduces the homepage information of the other information processing apparatus.

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--6. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the user identifier generating means generates a user password corresponding to the received individual information, and transfers the generated user password to the individual information storage means that stores the transferred user password correspondingly to the

individual information.

--7. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the generation source identifier storage means stores the generation source identifier identifying homepage information.

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--8. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein the generation service identifier storage means stores an introduction password as the generation source identifier identifying the homepage information.

--9. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the user identifier and the generation source identifier are used when the terminal device accesses information contained within an other information processing apparatus, and the transmitting means transmits the user identifier and the generation source identifier to the other information processing apparatus.

--10. (Amended) An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting homepage information to a terminal device, comprising:

a receiver for receiving a request signal transmitted from the terminal device requesting issue of a user password and an introduction password indicating a generation source of

the user password, and for receiving individual user information transmitted from terminal device;

a user register for storing the received individual user information;

a user password generator for generating a user password corresponding to the received individual user information and for transferring the generated user password to the user register where the transferred user password is stored correspondingly to the individual user information;

an introduction password memory for storing an introduction password to identify the homepage information; and

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a transmitter for transmitting the generated user password and the introduction password to the terminal device.

--11. (Amended) An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting information to a terminal device, comprising:

receiving means for receiving a user identifier transmitted from the terminal device and a generation source identifier indicating a generation source of the user identifier;

authenticating means for authenticating an access to the information in accordance with the received user identifier and generation source identifier; and

payment processing means for executing a process to pay a fee to the generation source indicated by the generation

source identifier in accordance with the result of the authentication.

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--12. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the authenticating means comprises an input checker for deciding whether a reception of the user identifier is an initial reception, and a user identifier register for storing user identifiers previously received and registering user identifiers having receptions decided to be initial receptions by the input checker.

--13. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the authenticating means comprises a generation source processor for outputting either of generation source information and no-generation source information in accordance with a result of a comparison between the received generation source identifier and a stored generation source identifier.

--14. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the generation source processor updates a point value that corresponds to the generation source identifier indicating the generation source in accordance with the result of the comparison.

--15. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising homepage information

storage means for storing homepage information, wherein the payment processing means converts the point value stored in the generation source processor into an amount of money and generates a signal for payment of the amount of money to the generation source indicated by the generation source identifier, the signal serving as a settlement signal having an identifier corresponding to a homepage of a payment source, an account number corresponding to the generation source identifier, and information of the amount.

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--16. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the authenticating means comprises: a correspondence register for registering the received user identifier and the generation source identifier correspondingly in a database when the received user identifier and the generation source identifier have been transferred from the information processing apparatus having an introduction source homepage to introduce the information; and an input checker for deciding whether the reception of the user identifier is an initial reception in accordance with the database.

--17. (Amended) The information processing apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the input checker decides whether the generation source identifier has been received and retrieves the generation source identifier corresponding to the user identifier from the database of the correspondence

register when the decision indicates that the generation source identifier has not been received.

--18. (Amended) An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting homepage information to a terminal device, comprising:

a receiver for receiving a user password and an introduction password indicating a generation source of the user password from the terminal device;

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an input checker for deciding whether the reception of the user password is an initial reception, and for deciding whether the introduction password received is proper;

a user password register for storing user passwords previously received by the receiver, and for registering new passwords when the input checker decides the new passwords have not been previously received;

an introduction source processor for outputting either of introducer information and no-introducer information in accordance with a result of a comparison between the received introduction password and a stored introduction password, and for updating a point value that corresponds to the introduction password indicative of the generation source in accordance with the result;

a homepage information memory for storing homepage information in an HTML format;

a payment processor for converting the point value stored in the introduction source processor into an amount of

money, wherein the payment processor generates a settlement signal having an identifier corresponding to a homepage of a payment source, an account number corresponding to the introduction password, and information of the amount; and

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a transmitter for transmitting to the terminal device either of the introducer information and the no-introducer information outputted from the introduction source processor; for transmitting the homepage information to the terminal device; and for transmitting the generated settlement signal to a settlement center.

--19. (Amended) An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting homepage information to a terminal device, comprising:

a receiver for receiving a user password and an introduction password indicating a generation source of the user password from the terminal device;

a correspondence register for registering the user password and the introduction password correspondingly in a database when the received user password and introduction password have been transferred from an information processing apparatus that owns an introduction source homepage for introducing the homepage;

an input checker for deciding whether the reception of the user password by said receiver is an initial reception by searching the database of the correspondence register, wherein the input checker retrieves an introduction password

corresponding to the user password from the database of correspondence register when the decision indicates the user password has been previously received;

an introduction source processor for outputting either of introducer information and no-introducer information in accordance with a result of a comparison between either of the received and retrieved introduction password and the stored introduction password, and for updating a point value that corresponds to the introduction password indicative of the generation source in accordance with the result;

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a homepage information memory for storing homepage information in an HTML format;

a payment processor for converting the point value stored in the introduction source processor into an amount of money, wherein the payment processor generates a settlement signal having an identifier corresponding to a homepage of a payment source, an account number corresponding to the introduction password, and information of the amount; and

a transmitter for transmitting to the terminal device either of the introducer information and the no-introducer information outputted from the introduction source processor; for transmitting the homepage information to the terminal device; and for transmitting the generated settlement signal to a settlement center.

--20. (Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

receiving a request transmitted from a terminal device;

generating a user identifier corresponding to the request; and

transmitting the generated user identifier and a generation source identifier which identifies a generation source of the user identifier stored in an information processing apparatus to the terminal device.

--21. (Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

receiving a user identifier transmitted from a terminal device and a generation source identifier indicating a generation source of the user identifier;

authenticating access to information stored in an information processing apparatus in accordance with the received user identifier and generation source identifier; and

executing a process for paying a fee to the generation source indicated by said generation source identifier in accordance with a result of the authenticating step.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-21 remain in the application and have been amended hereby.

As will be noted from the Declaration, Applicant is a citizen and resident of Japan and this application originated there.